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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Miscellaneous Data on MVD Troops

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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Comment: The first sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 2 should read "Operational Troops were stationed in Moscow, in the Moldavian, Latvian, and Estonian SSRs, and in the Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia".

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ARMY review completed.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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1.

All types of MVD troops except the Operational Troops were in existence [redacted] in 1938. Operational Troops were activated in 1944.

2.

[redacted] no actual or contemplated changes in MVD troops. [redacted] all the various types still existed as of June 1953.

3.

Note that in this report [redacted] differentiates clearly between guards for special purposes, operational troops, and interior troops, and states that all three, as well as the railway troops, are subordinate to co-equal main directorates of the MVD.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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it was common to refer to all MVD forces except the Border Guard Troops as "Vnutrenniki" ("Interiors"), regardless of whether or not they were Interior Troops, Railway Troops, Convoy Troops, Operational Troops, or Guard Troops for Special Objects. (Border Guard Troops were called "Pogranichniki".) all these troops were subordinate to co-equal main directorates of the MVD as of March 1953. the collective nickname "Vnutrenniki" might cause some confusion to the uninitiated as to the proper subordination.

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not definite if both Interior Troops and Operational Troops were garrisoned throughout the USSR. both were mostly stationed in border areas and were not concentrated in specific areas for instant use. both were at all times in a high state of readiness to deal with any emergency.

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Interior Troops were stationed mostly in the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Moldavian SSR's, in the Transcarpathian Ukraine (the area around Mukachevo /N 48-26, E 22-43/ and Uzhgorod /N 48-38, E 22-16/), in or near the industrial centers such as Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Sverdlovsk, Magnitogorsk, Karaganda /N 49-50, E 73-10/ and the Donbas, the area around Stalino /N 48-00, E 36-50/, and near various other industrial centers and large airfields.

no specific locations of Interior Troops.

Operational Troops were stationed in Moscow and in the Moldavian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Western Ukrainian, and Western Belorussian SSR's.

The

2nd and 4th Divisions were in Vilna /N 54-20, E 25-02/ and Shauli (Siauliai) /N 55-58, E 22-33/.

The 1st Separate Moscow Rifle Div. of Special Commitment was stationed in Moscow.

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it was extremely difficult to define the exact scope of duties of Operational Troops and Interior Troops. Their primary duty was the same, namely to eliminate subversive elements engaged in anti-state activities such as possible revolts. the Interior Troops were used mostly to guard airfields and Party and government buildings and to suppress any potential strikes in large factories, while Operational Troops were used for riot control, combatting "bandits" (the name given to ethnic partisan groups trying to secede from the USSR, such as the Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Moldavians), and resettling dissident groups.

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in any large-scale disorders all MVD troops in the immediate area would be utilized to suppress the disorder, regardless of the particular branch of the available troops.

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VOKHR (Voyska Okhrana - Guard Troops) was merely an abbreviation for Guard Troops for Special Objects (Voyska Po Okhrany Osobykh Ob'ektov) or Very Important Purposes (Osobo Vazhnykh Ob'ektov).

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the total MVD troop strength had decreased since World War II. in World War II, NKVD (now MVD) troops were used to protect the rear of the Soviet armies, as breakthrough units to penetrate German lines, to interrogate and indoctrinate PW's, and strongly to guard all armament factories against sabotage. This was done in addition to regular duties. These functions became unnecessary after World War II, so the overall strength of MVD troops was less in 1953 than during World War II. However, some directorates increased their strength after the war

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Border Guard Troops strength increased because:

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- (1) The overall length of the border was increased by the acquisition of new territories (Baltic States and Poland in 1939-40, East Prussia and parts of the Balkans in 1945).
- (2) The length of border territory to be guarded by an "otryad" ("detachment") was cut from 800-1000 km. to 300-600 km. in the postwar period.

Operational Troops, also called Troops for Special Commitment (OSNAZ - Operativnyye Voyska Osobogo Naznacheniya), did not exist before World War II. They were first activated in 1944 under the NKGB and were just being built up after the war.

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they were built up to their present strength in the postwar period.

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the Interior, Railway, and Convoy Troops decreased in strength after World War II.

the strength of Guard Troops for Special Objects did not change.

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[redacted] only MVD troops who could be easily identified were the Border Guard Troops, who could be recognized by the green color in the shoulder boards and caps

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[redacted] It was impossible to distinguish among the other MVD troops by shoulder boards, caps, or any other means.

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[redacted] an officer with 15 years of service in the NKVD, MGB and MVD, could not tell an officer or EM of Convoy Troops, for example, from an officer or EM of Interior Troops, Operational Troops, Railway Troops, or Guard Troops for Special Objects.

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[redacted] Stationing of MVD troops followed a definite pattern. It was based on availability for commitment to critical areas rather than on geographic areas or military districts.

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Railway Troops were stationed near important railroad bridges, tunnels, stations, depots, junctions and marshalling yards, and on trains. Guard Troops for Special Objects were stationed near jails, forced labor camps, sites of experimental laboratories, atomic plants, and armament factories.

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[redacted] Interior troops were stationed on the frontiers of newly acquired western territories. Convoy Troops were almost continuously on the move, taking arrestees to Siberia or other far eastern territories. [redacted] in 1945-1951 [redacted] officers [redacted] often spent two to four months on a round trip deporting Lithuanians to Siberia and/or Vladivostok.

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[redacted] never saw or heard of MVD troops with black-bordered red shoulder boards.

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[redacted] no administrative changes in the spring of 1951 which might be related to a change of shoulder board colors for MVD troops in the Soviet Zone of Germany.

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[redacted]

[redacted] Besides the MVD Railway Troops engaged in guarding railroad installations, the Soviet Army had a Komendatura at each major railroad station. Such a Komendatura had two to three officers and several EM. Their job was [redacted] to control troop movements and shipments of weapons and military equipment, and to issue certificates for tickets to officers travelling on orders. Such officers were given certificates for tickets in the following manner:

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Lieutenant Colonel and above - "soft" seats in First Class

Major - "hard" seats in four-man coupes in car #7, a car attached to most Soviet trains and reserved for officers

Captain and below - "hard" seats in car #7

These army Komendatura troops had no connection or liaison with the MVD Railway Troops, nor did the MVD control Soviet army troop or equipment moves.

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[redacted] if an EM was observed with black shoulder boards with magenta piping and with swords and spurs, either the EM was wearing unauthorized shoulder boards or the description was wrong.

Usually, only cavalry EM were issued spurs and swords, but such EM had blue shoulder boards with black piping and crossed sabers in a horseshoe insignia on the shoulder boards. Border Guard Troops EM who patrolled the border on horseback were also issued spurs and swords, but their shoulder boards were green with red piping.

All officers of Soviet Army combat arms (artillery, infantry, armor, cavalry, engineer and signal) and all MVD Border Guard Troops officers were issued spurs and swords. Such officers were supposed to wear spurs and swords whenever mounted or on OD duty, but they rarely did so.

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